A BRIEF BUT Full Vindication OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, FROM THE Romanist's Charge OF SCHISM.

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between 156 & 157

UMI

A PREFACE.

SOme Truths, as some Excellencies, are so much beholding to their own Light, that the shortest and most transient glimps can command our Assent to the one, and give us a sufficient knowledge of the other. Such is that of the inward worth of this Author, who as he was many ways qualified for that piece of ancient character, ἐκινδύνευε τὸ φαινόμενον σῶμα ψυχὴ καὶ νοῦς εἶναι, *Eunap de Alypio in vit. Jambl.* p. 29. (nature and austerity afforded him so small a portion of body, and God's blessing on great faculties and equal diligence, so rich endowments of Mind, that he approached to some nearness to be all Soul) *so will he be most fully pourtrayed on the least Table. Any thing that was truly his, that past under his last hand in his maturer Age, carries those Signatures on it, whereby being dead he yet speaketh,* articulately *to those that knew him, and* intelligibly, *if they please to believe it, to those which knew him not. And this single Sermon of his, which is here offered the Reader, vndertakes to make good what hath been said. Others have been willing to gather up all his Reliques, which they can retrieve from any Coast, that nothing which is so well qualified to receive, may want its due veneration; And the publick is much obliged to this their diligence. But for the* compleat Image *of this true Son of the* English *Church, his temper, and the reasons of his unmoved constancy to our Persecuted Mother, it will be competently drawn from this one appearance of him.*

Con-

Conformable is the frame of the Engliſh *Reformation, ſo ſtrongly guarded and ſecured inwardly from its own Principles, Antiquity and Purity, of ſo ſtraight and ſo clean, ſo plain and unintricate a making, ſo clear and chryſtalline both in its ſpring and ſtreams, that the ſimpleſt colours and the quickeſt hand will give us the juſteſt proſpect, the vitalleſt picture of it. This one parallel of* Hezekiah's *taking away the* high-places, *&c. (being here perſpicuouſly brought home by an uniform concurrence of ſuitable circumſtances to the* Engliſh *Platform) ſuperceeding the Readers ſolicitude, by ſupplying the want of any larger collection of diſcourſes and vindications in the point of* Schiſm, *or* Hereſie, *or* Non-Communion *with the Catholick Church.*

Thus much was uſeful to be premiſed of the intrinſick value of this SERMON, *to engage the indifferent Readers ſurvey, not to anticipate his judgment of it. But the more extrinſick circumſtances of the* Place, *and* Preacher, *and* Auditory, *and* Deſign *of it, may deſerve ſome farther reflection, in order to thoſe which were not foreſeen, nor conſequently at all conſidered by the deſigner. The Scene was* Paris, *and if I miſtake not,* L' Hoſtel de Blinville *there, the place whither the* moſt Illuſtrious, *then* Prince of Wales *his Highneſs, with his Family, aſſembled for the Divine Offices of the Lords day. The avow'd Deſign, for the fortifying of all his* Engliſh *Auditors, againſt the infuſions, to which* that *Clime* (*not the remoter of* Rome *or* Madrid) *might poſſibly ſubject them. The* Preacher, *as great a Prelatiſt as any whom unkind or jealous Brethren have ever blaſted under that title.*

His love and deſire of the Peace of the Church ſo ardent, and his Interceſſions ſo conſtant for the Return of it, that he was unwilling to be known to poſterity by any other monument than this, that He daily pray'd for the peace of the Church.

2 Kings

2 Kings XVIII. 22.

But if ye ſay unto me, We truſt in the Lord our God: is not that he whoſe high places, and whoſe Altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath ſaid to Judah and Jeruſalem, Ye ſhall worſhip before this Altar in Jeruſalem?

YOU may pleaſe to obſerve, that Detraction ſometimes miſtakes her aim, and by a weak aſſault commends that good which it intends to villifie. Thus this Commander was here ſent to rail down *Hezekiah*, that his cruel Tongue might make, as 'twere, the Preface unto his Maſter's Sword. But ſo fond was his attempt, that no ſtudied Paraſite could have more flatter'd him. So that methinks this Prince's Worth ne're ſeems more fair, than in the mouth of *Rabſhakeh*. He's there tax'd for demoliſhing the High Places, and for the Subverſion of ſo many Altars; Actions that were enjoyn'd him by *Moſes*: as if a Man ſhould accuſe *Henoch* of Godlineſs, or *Abraham* of his Belief: who would not take ſuch Accuſations as theſe for no leſs than artificial Praiſes, as if ſome Orator had laboured to commend theſe by an *Irony*: *Henoch* a good man, but *godly*; *Abraham* holy no doubt, but that he was *faithful*; and *Hezekiah* a virtuous gallant Prince, wer't not he's ſo *Religious*?

I could

I could in Charity thus interpret these Words of *Rabshakeh*, were he not a Servant unto the King of *Assur*: but to speak truth, His Commission makes it plain that he came to Rail: only his more friendly malice objects goodness instead of Sin, as if here Detraction had been suborn'd to commend an Enemy. You may thus far trust *Rabshakeh*: for in my Text he speaks exact Truth, to spite the *poor King* of *Judah*. This you'l easily find in the precedent parts of this Chapter: and withal you'l there see the *Hebrews* in a lamentable estate, and yet indeed not so sad as ours. Their fenced Cities all taken by the Arms of *Assyria*, vers. 13. The Treasures of the King, and of the Temple too, all consumed, *vers.* 15. *Jerusalem* it self, the City Royal, besieg'd ('twas not yet lost, 'twas not so bad here), *vers.* 17. and now *Rabshakeh* is sent to perswade the King into Chains. He tells him, there was no hope in his own strength: for though *Assyria* it self should be so kind as to lend him Horses, yet (so low was he brought) he could scarce find so many Troopers. No hope in *Egypt*; his old known Confederates, they were a meer broken Reed. Nay, he dares add more, No hope at all in God neither: for though *Hezekiah* had indeed but reformed the *Old* Church, yet in *Rabshakeh*'s sense he had set up a *New one*, he *had forsaken God, and thrown down his Altars, and remov'd his High* Glorious *Places*: and upon this false supposition, what a Rise is here taken by this fighting Orator? *But if ye say unto me, We trust in the Lord our God, is not this he?* &c.

You see then 'tis no strange thing at all to find a Reformed Church oppressed by Arms, or by Orators. But since my Text here is a part of *Rabshakeh*'s speech, I shall leave the Soldier, and only follow him in this part of his Oration. Where, for my more clear proceeding, I shall a little invert the order of the words, and shall beseech you to observe with me these Particulars. *First*,

First, You may behold the Church of *Judah* corrupted, in these words, *High places and altars*, (i. e.) Altars in high places: *Secondly*, these Corruptions reformed, *whose high places, and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah*, &c. *Thirdly*, the Reformation censured; *But if ye say unto me, We trust in the Lord our God, is not that he*, &c. Where it's silently tax'd of Novelty and of Schism, indeed of no less than Apostacy it self, and that for this cause they had no hope at all left in God. Of these in their order. *First*, of the Corruptions, [*High places and altars.*]

Were bare Reason put to visit the Church of *Judah*, her Obliquities in the conceit of most men, might well perhaps pass for Trifles. For so God have his due Worship, a man would think, what great matter is't where't be done: The High Places may be as serviceable as the Court of the Temple: and why may not his Sacrifice be slain as well at *Hebron* as *Jerusalem*? But *Israel* must be judged by the Laws; and in Points of so high concernment must learn to do, not what she fancies, but what that Text hath enjoyn'd; *Take heed thou offer not*, &c. *Deut.* 12. at the 13. This *Moses* words were plain, That God hath enjoyn'd but *One* only Altar, but only one for Burnt Sacrifice. And lest the violation of that Sacred Law should seem some slight trivial thing, do but hear the Tenor of those severe words in the 17th of *Levit. What man soever there be of the house of Israel, that kills an Ox or a Lamb*, &c. *and bringeth it not to the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, unto the altar that is before the Tabernacle, to offer an offering unto the Lord, before the Tabernacle of the Lord, Blood shall be imputed unto that man; he has shed blood, and that man shall be cut off from among his people*, in the 4th vers. of that Chapter. And in the same place, vers. 9. it's again repeated, and extended too, that it may gain the

more hold and reverence: *Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers which sojourn among you,* (it must extend to *Jews* and Proselytes) *that offers a burnt offering, or sacrifice, and brings it not to the door of the Tabernacle, even that man shall be cut off from among his people.* A Law sharp and terrible, fit indeed for Mount *Sinai*, and to be delivered in the voice of a Thunder: who would not tremble at that Offence, in the Revenge whereof Beasts shall be esteemed as Men; to kill a Lamb, as to commit a Murther: that man shall be cut off from among his People; such Devotions are no less than Capital, nor will God be satisfied for such Offences as these, till both People and Priest become a Sacrifice.

If you ask the Ground of this severe Edict, I might well reply, That to yield a Reason, doth not still befit the Majesty of a Law. Yet *Josephus* tells us, That God therefore enjoined one only Altar, that thence it might become the Sacred Emblem both of his Churches Unity, and his own. *We have*, saith he, *but one altar*, Θεὸς γὰρ ἕν, καὶ τὸ ἔθνος ἓν ἐστιν. *For our great God is but One, and our twelve Tribes make but one People only.* There are Interpreters more home, that plainly tell us, this Law was made for two Reasons: *First*, to prevent Schism; and *Secondly*, to prevent Idolatry. First, *Schism*: For had leave been given to this heady wrangling People, to do Sacrifice in many several places, the Diversity of Rites such men would have soon fallen into, might ere long have brought them into more several Factions, than at that time they had Tribes. Secondly, to prevent *Idolatry*, a Sin which for a long time seem'd natural to the *Jews*; and what so fit course to keep it off, as to admit of Sacrifice, but only in that Place where the High Priest himself must look on, whom it so much concern'd both in point of Conscience, and of Interest too, to serve no God at all but the true One.

And

And 'tis worth observing with what height of Zeal this strict Law was kept whilst the *Hebrew* Church remained yet Primitive. You may read the Story in the 22*d* of *Joshua*. An Altar was set up on the other side *Jordan* by the *Reubenites*, and the *Gadites*, and the half Tribe of *Manasses*, their lot falling in those parts. News of this strange structure is soon brought to *Shiloh*, where it found at once both the Tabernacle, and the High Priest: The People murmur, the Army is straight drawn together; so that the Forces prepared against *Canaanitish* strangers, are now designed to defend *Moses* Law against more than Two Tribes of *Israel*. But prudently first an Embassy is designed, *Phineas* is sent, and with him Ten Princes more to expostulate with these men, with what intent they had set up such an Altar as this, which must needs lye so openly expos'd unto that great height of Misconstruction. Their answer you may find, verse 22. *The Lord God of Gods, The Lord God of Gods he knows, and Israel shall know, we have not built it in Rebellion*, to offer there any Sacrifice, but only to be a Witness betwixt us and you, that though divided by *Jordan*, we have yet a share in the self same Altar with you. For *God forbid*, say they, that we should *Rebel against the Lord, and turn this day from following the Lord, to build an altar for Burnt-offering, or Sacrifice, besides the altar of the Lord our God which is before the Tabernacle*, in the 29*th* verse of that Chapter. You see of so foul a Nature was this Offence then esteemed, that by more than Nine Tribes 'twas held cause enough of a War, and that a Civil War too, wherein *Jews* were to fight with *Jews*: and, but to take off the suspicion where no such crime was, it brought more than Two Tribes to the Apology you have heard, so high, and so pathetical.

And yet in ſucceeding times how conſtant'ly did they violate this moſt ſevere Sacred Law? Mountains, and Woods, and Plains, they would needs turn each place into a Tabernacle. 'Twas then you would think the Holy Land without doubt, whoſe more frequent Buildings were Altars: but *Paleſtine* indeed was then fartheſt from God, when ſhe all thus ſeemed a Temple; and there was no greater ſign of *Judah's* Apoſtacy, than too many ſuch ſigns of Religion. Nay, ſo largely ſpread was this grand Corruption, that you'l eaſily find there was ſcarce a Man did avoid it. Kings, and Prieſts, and People; ſome were Agents, others Spectators, and all bore a part in this forbidden Sacrifice. Thus *Solomon*, and the whole People are tax'd, 1 *Kings* 3. 2, 3. And you need not doubt the Prieſts were there too; for be the place where it would, none by *Moſes* Law could ſacrifice but the Prieſts. Nay, not only *Solomon's*, but the ſucceeding Records of all their good Kings ſtill runs with this abatement; He walkt in the ways of *David* his Father, *but* the High Places were not taken away, the People ſtill offer'd Sacrifice in the tops of the High Places. It's thus ſaid of no leſs than Seven: *Solomon*, and *Aſa*, *Jehoſaphat*, *Jehoaſh*, *Amaziah*, *Azariah*, and *Jothan*. Cardinal *Cajetan* thinks this groſs Corruption was as general, as if the *Jews* reſolv'd to make null *Moſes* Law by an *Hebrew* Cuſtom to the contrary: and they had don't without doubt, were our Sins as well able to abrogate a Law, as we well know they are to break it. This is plain, that the Cardinal conceiv'd this Abuſe was grown into a Cuſtom National, which had there ſpread it ſelf over all ſorts and kind of Perſons: So that it found no open, no conſtant Oppoſition at all from any body of men then conſiderable: Had it, 'tis clear enough, That Cuſtoms thus oppos'd, can put Humane Laws in no danger. But I need not quote ſuch Authorities,

rities, the very word there us'd, where the Text ſpeaks of thoſe Kings, infers this Truth ſtrongly enough. *But the High places were not taken away*, the People ſtill offer'd Sacrifice in the High Places. For that Word, the *People*, when it's put ſingly, and without oppoſition, implies, without doubt, the whole Nation which it points at. Thus when God *commands* Moſes; *Speak now in the ears of the people*: Or in thoſe Words to *Pharaoh*, *Let my people go*: No doubt but that Word did point at each ſeveral *Jew*; and though ſometime it may well bear a ſence leſs general, yet it then implies ſo much the far greater Number, that commonly what remains, is neither a part eminent nor conſiderable. Nay, to go no farther than my Text, 'tis plain enough from theſe Words of *Rabſhakeh* (who having taken ſo many Cities, had now ſpent ſome good time in *Jewry*), that this Corruption was ſo univerſally ſpread, without any viſible, any noted part to oppoſe it, that he conceived it the only true Service of the God of *Iſrael*: With what Face elſe could He have told the *Jews*, They had no hopes in their God, becauſe their King had quite overturned his Religion? Had there indeed been any Number of Note that had oppos'd this Corruption, is't at all probable it would have been conceal'd in theſe *Hebrew* Hiſtories? Their Pen-men, we know, were all Zealous enough to preſerve the Honour of *Judea*; and yet in this particular we find a ſtill total ſilence: And if any man will needs hold the contrary, they who call ſo much for *Catalogue of Names*, might in Juſtice demand of this grand Undertaker, to ſhew a Liſt of thoſe *Jews*, who from Age to Age, whilſt this Corruption held, did not at all worſhip in High Places.

But

But you'l demand perhaps, For how long a time was the Hebrew Church thus corrupted? And indeed Learned Men differ here. Some think this abuse began in the times of *Othoniel* and *Ehud*, Judges: Others plac'd it in the days of *Gideon*; admit either of these conjectures, and 'twill be plain in Chronology, that this forbidden worship held no less than six hundred Years; for all agree, *Hezekiah* was the first who durst be so good, in those bad times, as to reform this corruption. But grant we do abate of this, since great Clerks conceive, that from the time that the Ark was parted from the Tabernacle, which was no less than ninety years, from the days of *Eli* the Priest, when the Ark went Captive to *Philistia*, until they both met again in the Temple of *Solomon*, 'twas lawful to sacrifice at more than one only altar, because God had promised his more immediate Presence as well before the Ark, as before the Tabernacle. For this reason I say (though perhaps it hold not) grant we abate of that time; what I find established by common consent, will prove large enough to support all my whole intention. For no man dares deny, the Text is so plain, in that Catalogue of Kings I related, that this corruption held from the days of *Solomon* unto the Reign of King *Hezekiah*, and so no less than upon the Point of three hundred years, as is plain, by the computation of *Arias Montanus*, and by the most exact in Chronology.

So then, three things are here very considerable; first, the *Nature* of this Corruption, 'twas in the Censure of Gods Law no less than the sin of Murther; and in the Censure of the *Jews*, it deserved no less than the Revenge of a plain Civil War. Secondly, the *Extent* of this Corruption; it had spread it self throughout the whole face of *Judea*; so that all that was at that time, God's Visible Church, was at once involv'd in this Error. For I need

not

not now speak of the Ten Tribes; their high places were made waste, as is plain enough from the Calves of *Dan*, and of *Bethel*. Thirdly, the *Continuance* of this Corruption; it held probably for six, but no man can deny, that it *remained* in the Church of *Jewry* upon the point of three Centuries of years.

Hence 'twill follow clearly; The whole Visible Church may be so far corrupted, that though she forsake not God, and so run *in Non Ecclesiam*, to be no Church at all, yet for a long time she may do Publick Worship in a most gross forbidden manner; and this kind of Abuse may be so dangerous, that upon its full discovery, both Prince and People may be in conscience bound to embrace Reformation.

Has God's Church of the Law been so foully blemished? and may that of the Gospel boast of a more constant Beauty? Are the Promises of this kind more large to us, than they were to that Church wherein God's own Son was born? She in as plain Terms was then call'd the Spouse of God: *I will betroth thee unto me for ever*, saith the Lord, *Hos.* 2. His People and his Flock: *We are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hands*, Psal. 95. Yea, his Sons and his Daughters; *Thou shalt call me, my Father, saith the Lord, and shalt not depart from me*, (Jer. 3. 19.) True, the Gates of Hell shall not so prevail, but Christ will still have a Church; and could the Gates of Hell prevail against her that was betrothed God's own Spouse for ever? That is, at least till Christ came. No, they could not prevail to make her run *in non Ecclesiam*, to become no true Church at all; and yet they might prevail to make her run *in Corruptam Ecclesiam*, into a Church so much corrupt in her Publick Worship, that she might much need a Reformation. And indeed, 'tis a strange thing that any Christian Church which God has plac't among *Gentiles*,

tiles, should be so puffed up with a thought of her own strength, that she cannot fail in this particular. For 'tis a Truth clear in the Text, that there's no Church of *Gentiles*, but like a Branch from the Vine, it may be quite cut from Christianity. And which is worth observing, St. *Paul* has indited this self-same Truth to the *Romans*, in the 11*th* chap. verse 21. *Be not high minded, but fear; for if God spar'd not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee.* And that this Text implies the Christian *Gentiles* may be all cut off quite from Christ, is here the Conclusion of *Stapleton*, and of the *Remists* Notes on that Text, and of divers of their way.

And to say the plain truth, that Text I named can well bear no other comment, unless we'l fondly affirm, that St. *Paul* warns the *Gentiles* to take heed of that mischance, which yet indeed could not possibly fall out. And then I beseech you observe, if that same Church which boasts most of strength, may yet run *in Non Ecclesiam*, may become no Church at all, she may much more run *in Corruptam Ecclesiam*, into a Church so corrupt in her Publick Worship, that she may now need a Reformation.

I say, she may run into a corrupt Church: and do but consider her new claim of *Infallibility*, and you'l easily yield, 'tis a Victory to prove, that *Rome* may be conquered: to make this appear, *She may err*, is enough to convince her of no little part of her Errors. If you ask me to shew more, I shall beg leave to reply, That 'tis an Argument I affect not; for I had much rather be employed in discourses of good life, than in these of controversies; as holding that, in all kind of Contention, to be the most fit Christian Prayer, *Give peace in our time, O Lord.* Yet since I *here* meet with such Disputes and Waverings; in some I'le think out of *Conscience*; in others, either out of *Vanity*, to entertain their time, or that under pretence of searching Christian

ſtian Truths, they may indeed drive a Trade; I muſt hence hold it a Duty I owe unto moſt of thoſe that now hear me; yea, a Duty I owe to that venerable Church that baptiz'd us all, though our now poor afflicted Mother, to keep the Fruit of her own Womb from thus trampling on her; to keep them, as much as in me lies, from being gull'd and cheated from her Unity, and withal from communicating too deeply in ſin with thoſe who have now caſt her on the ground.

If you ask then for the corruptions of the *Weſtern* Church: ſuppoſe I inſtance but in one alone, She took the *Cup* from the People: An Abuſe ſet up againſt as clear Text as e're the High Places were. *Drink ye all of this*, ſaith our Saviour, St. *Mat.* 26. And again (as they interpret that Text), *Except ye eat the fleſh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you*, in that 6*th* chap. o St. *John*. Mark [*ye have no life in you*]; I know they defend this, and make no queſtion at all, but ſome witty Scribe might have been as well able to defend the *Jews*; who, for ought I know, might have ſaid, as they do, That the *Hebrew* Church had power over the Sacraments, (and Sacrifices are no more) or by their new Doctrine of *Concomitance*, they might maintain much more probably, that their High Places and Altars were but only us'd as Parts, as Appurtenances, as Concomitants of the Tabernacle, than theſe, that Shed-blood lies in the Hoſt. For Shed-blood it muſt be; This is my very Blood which is ſhed for you: So that to tell us of Blood in the Body, of Blood running in the Veins, is indeed to ſhew forth the Lord's Life, but not, as he commands, to ſhew forth his death till he comes. Now, admit the Doctrine of *Concomitance*, (which tho' in this point is but a meer perfect fiction) yet Chriſt enjoins *Drink ye all of this*. And I appeal to your own Senſes themſelves, whether to eat Chriſt's Blood, be to drink it.

Their Publick Service in an *unknown Tongue*, is it not as clearly againſt the Doctrine of St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. 14. *How*, ſaith he, *ſhall the unlearned ſay Amen at thy giving of thanks, ſeeing he underſtands not what thou ſay'ſt?* in the 16*th* verſe of that chapter. Two things you ſee the Apoſtle there takes for granted; firſt, that the unlearned ought to ſay *Amen* at God's Publick Service: Secondly, they cannot joyn that conſent of theirs, but to thoſe words they underſtand.

I might inſtance in many more particulars; as in the Adoration of *Images*, of *Saints*, of the *Euchariſt*, in the Doctrine of *Purgatory*, and thoſe other Articles of the New Creed of *Trent*; whereof ſome are of dangerous practiſe; nay, (as Learned men amongſt themſelves have confeſs'd, *Gerſon*, *Eſpenſæus*, and many others) they are of practice, among the Vulgar at leaſt (ſome doubt not to add, and among the Learned too) no leſs than Idololatrical. Others again are made Articles of Faith, which yet for ought appears either in the Text, or in Antiquity, are indeed not ſo much as probable Opinions: So that to ſay truth, there are ſtore of men who have not Ignorance enough to believe ſuch Articles. And yet the *Weſtern* Church has forced many Souls into the Faith of this New Creed, both by the Priſon and the Stake: And in this Tyranny hath ſhewed her ſelf far worſe than e're old *Judah* did. For though we read of no viſible conſpicuous number that did avoid the High Places, yet in Charity we may think there were ſome few that did ſo, and yet in this regard we read not ſo much as one either puniſhed, or diſgraced by an *Hebrew* Magiſtrate.

'Tis true then, that God's Church, yea, his Chriſtian Church, may be ſtained with ſome groſs foul Corruptions, But what? Becauſe ſhe may thus err, ſhall each giddy Brain be allow'd to controul, or each private Hand to reform her?

her? Admit this Disorder once, and let a Church be indeed most Apostolick, yet you may be assured she shall ne're want Reformers, if she have either Sons to be employ'd in Rebellion, or Lands to be enjoyed by Sacriledge. A *Corah* then will dare to tell *Moses* to his face, That all the Congregation is holy, as holy as himself, or the best employ'd in the Tabernacle; all Kings and Priests then; and all this stir is rais'd, not so much that he dislikes the Order of *Aaron*, but that indeed he likes his Revenue. And therefore in my Text there's care had of this. A Reformation follows; but you'l find it brought in by no less than by the Power Royal, *whose high places, and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah*, &c.

This part affords Varieties; and I must therefore divide it. Here's then first the Prime Agent in this Reformation I nam'd, *Hezekiah* the King. Secondly, the Extent of the Reformation, 'twas only brought into his own Territories, *Judah* and *Jerusalem*. Thirdly, the manner how he setled it; 'twas done as well by teaching truth, as by reforming corruptions: He took away the High Places, and he said, *Ye shall worship before this altar at Jerusalem*. First, of the Prime Agent, *Hezekiah* the King.

But to remove these Abuses here, did not this Prince first abuse himself, to fit his hands for this work? Did *Hezekiah* the King make his Person no less than plain Head of the Church of *Judah*? Were some Modern Tongues to have supplied *Rabshakeh*'s place, this is the Theam, and this is the Phrase they'd have chosen. And yet I assure my self this pious Prince would have stood to't, that he was supreme Governour, in all Causes, and over all Persons; so that upon provocation given, he could no doubt have depos'd the High Priest, as *Solomon* once did *Abiathar*. But yet (I beseech you observe) 'tis one thing to burn Incense, ano-

aher to enjoin that this Service be ſtill duly done: One thing to offer Sacrifice, another to command that no Sacrifice be offer'd, but on that one Altar at *Jeruſalem*; The firſt of theſe belonged unto *Aaron*'s Sons, the other to the Heirs of *David*. To bar *Hezekiah* this Power in the Church, were to impair his Royalties, and to deny that to the Crown of *Judah* which all Princes have ſtill challenged; yea, thoſe without the Church, the Kings of *Nineveh*, and Monarchs of *Aſſyria*; Their Swords were Eccleſiaſtical. Thus that King proclaims a Religious Faſt, *Jon.* 3. And *Nebuchad.* Dan. 3. 29. Thus from the beginning Chriſtian Princes have ſtill done the like, and have let us ſee by their Laws, that in point of Coercive Power they ſtill kept the Church-ſupremacy, as clearly appears in the *Theodoſian Code*, and in that of *Juſtinian* in the *Capitulars* of *Charles* the great, and ſuch other collections. *Juſtinian*, in an Eccleſiaſtical Novel, comes fully home in this point: *Jubemus beatiſſimos Archiepiſcopos & Patriarchas, (i.) Senioris Romæ, & Conſtantinopoleos Novæ Romæ*; We command, ſaith he, (and as ſome Copies have it under the pain of Depoſition too) the moſt bleſſed Archbiſhop, and Patriarchs (i.) of *Old Rome*, and of *Conſtantinople*, then call'd *New Rome*, &c. If that Emperor might command all the Patriarchs themſelves, and that in a buſineſs Eccleſiaſtical too, where then lay the Church-ſupremacy? And theſe *Novels* of his were in ſo high eſteem with St. *Gregory* the great, that 'tis plain in his Epiſtles, he decides Church-cauſes by them, and that with an *Ita decrevit Dominus noſter Imperator*; Our Lord the Emperor hath thus rul'd it in his Laws.

Beſides, moſt plain it is, that the Old *Hebrew* Kings held the Work in my Text to belong to them as in chief. And this Opinion God himſelf confirm'd; for throughout their whole ſtory you'l find, that Kings only are check'd when the Church was corrupt, and they only prais'd when ſhe mended.

mended. In those Scriptures we read but of Three Noted Reformations, and they were all done by their Kings. By King *Asa*, by this King in my Text, and the last by King *Josiah*. Those High Places alone were pulled down by *Asa* which were set up to the worship of a false God. *Hezekiah* goes farther, and destroys them too, which were set up for the false worship, though of the true only Deity. *Josiah* goes on, and removes the Groves, and such devices as those which *Solomon*, and other Kings, having of old set up, they were again renew'd in the wicked Reign of *Manasseh*.

But grant a Christian Church to be indeed corrupt, or that really men think it is so, is't not allowed by Christ's Law, either for Subjects, or others, against the Will of the King, into whose care she's put, by force of Arms, to constrain, or beat her to a Purity? A case of conscience you'l find, whereby to resolve this, decided by our Saviour's own Mouth, in the *9th* chap. of St. *Luke*; where entring, saith the Text, into a Village of *Samaria*, the Inhabitants were so far from receiving the Doctrine he intended to preach, that indeed they endur'd not his Person. Hence *James* and *John*, the Two Sons of Thunder, begin straight to shew their Temper; What! not receive Christ, nor the Christian Faith! *Master, shall we command fire from heaven?* For if Perswasion will not draw men unto the Gospel thou bring'st, it must be done by Fire, or by Sword. Our Saviour replies, *Ye know not of what spirit ye are:* Ye understand not at all what thing 'tis to be a Christian. I came not to destroy mens Lives, but to save them; I came not to plant a Religion in Blood; no, I leave that to *Turks*, and to *Mahomet*: Had that been my Intent, you *James* and *John* had been no Apostles for me: I would then have made choice of Commanders from an Army, not of Fisher-men from their Nets. And yet in these

theſe times have not we the like Sons of Thunder? What! will they not receive the New *Holy* Diſcipline, the very *Scepter* of *Chriſt*, the *Throne* of his Mediatorſhip (and indeed they could do little, if they knew not how to cloath their new Fancies in good Words), Lord, ſhall we command Fire from Heaven? or if you will, Fire from Hell? Shall we raiſe a Rebellion? Shall we by a Covenant ſwear Chriſt into his Throne, or forſwear the King out of his? What think ye will be replied to theſe, and the like kind of men, but *ye know not of what ſpirit ye are?* It's not lawful by Blood to bring in Chriſtian Faith; and is it lawful by Blood to bring in that thing which they of late call a Chriſtian Government? It's not lawful to plant a Church by ſuch Force; and is it lawful thus to reform it? They who think it is, truly for my part, I neither at all know of what ſpirit they are, no, nor of what reaſon neither; This I well know, of what ſpirit they are not; they are of no ſpirit Evangelical.

So then, to attempt to reform a Church in deſpite of the Prince whom God has now placed her under, is to invade Royal Power, and can be indeed called but a more zealous kind of Rebellion; ſince to cure a Church by ſuch drenches as theſe, is, no doubt, at the ſame time to give Poyſon to a Kingdom: and 'twas therefore decreed in that moſt ancient Council of *Eliberis* (twenty years before that of *Nice*), "That if in hatred to Idolatry it ſelf, a "private man would needs pull down Images, he ſhould "by no means be eſteemed a Martyr, if he loſt his life in "that ſervice. And the Fathers there give their Reaſon, becauſe we have no example for this either from Prophets or Apoſtles. No, 'twas their part to preach down High Places, or Idols, but they well knew 'twas the Duty of Kings, of Supreme Powers to remove them: And he can be no Martyr for the firſt Table of the Law, who is in the

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ſame deed a Tranſgreſſor of the ſecond: nor will God at all thank him as a Reformer of his Church, who in the ſelf-ſame Act is no leſs than a plain Traitor to his Deputy. So that as for Subjects to take up Arms againſt their Kings, is by the Doctrine of St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*, in all caſes damnable: ſo ſpecially to do this in point of our Religion, which ſo much commends and bleſſeth Patience, and Sufferings, and Martyrdom, either upon pretence to plant it where it now is not, or to reform it where it has been planted, is of all other kinds of Contentions or Wars, the moſt *Turkiſhly Antichriſtian.*

And therefore to avoid Quarrels and Blood, 'twas *Hezekiah* the King who here reforms the Church of *Judea*; But yet, durſt he adventure alone upon an attempt ſo ſacred and ſo great? No, you'l eaſily find in the circumſtances of the Text, that he had both a *Council*, and withal a *Rule* to direct him; for if you read the 30, and the 31, of the 2*d* of *Chron.* you'l ſee this Reformation was made in the time of a moſt ſolemn Paſſover, where the Prieſts and Levites, the Princes and the People met; and when, ſaith the Text, chap. 30. ver. 30. *Hezekiah had ſpoke comfortable words to all the Levites that taught the good knowledg of the Lord.* Yea, *Joſephus* ſeems to put into this Kings mouth a *Synodical Oration* in the ninth of his *Antiquities*. I ſay, when upon the Kings encouragement the Levites had once taught that good Knowledg, then upon ſuch counſel, ſuch direction as this, then came the Reformation; For ſo *Moſes* was plain in the bleſſing he gave upon the whole Tribe of *Levi*: *They ſhall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Iſrael thy Law*, *Deut.* 33. at the 10. And as he had a *Council*, ſo 'tis as plain by the ſelf-ſame words he had a *Rule* too to go by, 'twas the *good Knowledg of the Lord*, which is in *Moſes* phraſe *his Judgments and his Law*: And leſt he ſhould perhaps err in the *Interpretation* of that ſacred

cred Text, he had the help of the best Comment too, as you but now heard from the 22*d* of *Joshua*, 'twas the sense and practice of the Hebrew Church, whilst she was yet Primitive.

That the *Church* of *England* was reformed by the Power Royal, by a Power that made use of the like Counsel, and like Rule, is a truth I think none here doubts of; if any do, 'twill be soon clear'd both from our Stories and our Laws; that first *Our Liturgy* which Reform'd Gods Publick Service, was compos'd by Bishops and others of great Knowledg in Antiquity, many whereof attained the Honour of Martyrdom: And then the Book of our *Articles* which reformed the Theological Tenets, the common Doctrines of our Church, were Compiled by *Synods*, by Convocations, by the two Solemn Provincial Councils of *London*, or if you will, the two National, because both our Provinces concurr'd in the same truth, in the years 52 and 62. *And that our Rule* was the same they here used in *Jewry*, Gods word interpreted by the Sense and Practice of the Ancient Church, appears in the next Synod after, where 'tis decreed in plain words, "That whosoever un-"dertakes to teach any truth as necessary to salvation, "which he is not able to make good by Text, as 'twas un-"derstood by the Fathers, and the Ancient Church, "shall be expos'd to Ecclesiastical Censure, and Cano-"nical Correction. And we cannot think our Church would enjoyn a *Rule* to her Sons, which yet she had not kept her self. In this Point then we are hand in hand with *Judah*; the same Power, the same Council, the same Rule. I go to the next following, *The Extent of the Reformation*: 'twas only set up in his own Territories, *Judah* and *Jerusalem*.

Indeed

Indeed *Hezekiah* wrote Letters, and sent to the remains of the Ten Tribes, to joyn in this great Action with him; but they, for the most part, contemn'd his Message, and slighted his Attempt, 2 *Chron.* 30. The King did exceeding well: For 'twas to be much wished, that in a Design so highly pious as this, all *Israel* would have been unanimous: But yet if *Ephraim*, and others, will refuse to hear, *Judah* must mend alone. How generally a Reformation was desir'd in these parts of Christendom, by men of the choicest Note, both for Learning and Piety, 'twere no hard Task at all to shew you. Nay, in the very Council of *Trent*, Ten several Kingdoms and States desir'd the *Cup* for the People, both by their Ambassadors, and their Prelates: Many press'd for a Redress of Service in an unknown Tongue; many for many other particulars: All were refus'd, and the Reason plain; Order was there taken (you may guess by whom), that there were more *Italian Prelates*, sometimes by Twenty, sometimes by an Hundred, than there were of all the World besides; so that in effect all this Christendom would have reformed her self, had not *Italy* oppos'd it. Nor can that be call'd a *General Council*, ('twas but *Patriarchal* at the *largest*) since the *Bishops* of the *East*, and other great Churches, were not there, no, nor those Three long since so most famous Patriarchs of *Constantinople*, and *Alexandria*, and *Antioch*, who though they may be *deceiv'd* in that Tenet of the *Procession of the Holy Ghost*, yet whatever Error they are in, in that point, they are in no Heresie, as is confess'd by *P. Lombard* himself, and has been oft made unanswerably good, by Men as well vers'd in controversal Points, as any Christendom has bred. But 'tis the Artifice of the *Western* Church, to perswade the World, that those ancient parts are now fallen from the Church, that so within the Curtains of their own *Patriarchate* she may have General Councils, and an

univerſal Church; and ſo though ſhe now make not near a Third part of the Chriſtian World, yet with the *Donatiſt*, ſhe dares profeſs her ſelf the only Catholick Church, and ſo damns all Mankind without her. Neither yet do I deny, nay, I affirm it rather, That a true General Council could beſt preſcribe Remedies unto ſo large a Diſeaſe; but to convoke that, was extreamly difficult, and we are all ſure 'twas not done. For what Chriſtian Princes can now give ſafe conduct to the Biſhops and Patriarchs of thoſe remoter parts of the Church? So then, if neither a true General Council, nor free Patriarchal, could be had, were't not ſtrange Imprudence to refuſe a Cure, becauſe we could not uſe the beſt Phyſicians? In this caſe no doubt it unqueſtionably holds, what *Gerſon*, the Learned Chancellor of *Paris*, has ſpoken out without Limitation, and he (as *Bell.* affirms) was, *Vir doctus & pius*; he was a learned and a good man too; and you ſhall hear that good mans words; *Nolo tamen dicere*, &c. "I will not ſay, ſaith he, but the "Church may be reformed by parts; yea, this is neceſſary, "and to effect it Provincial Councils may ſuffice, and in "ſome things Dioceſan: 'tis in his *Tract. de Gen. Con. unius obed.* And indeed Particular Churches have gone farther in this kind than our dear Mother e're dream'd of. For *four things* there are chiefly of Synodical Cognizance, *Articles of Faith, Forms of Divine Worſhip, Theological Concluſions for the Peace of each Church, and the points of Ceremony.* Only theſe Three laſt were the Subject of our Reformation, we ſtill adhering unto the *Three Creeds*, which are the Faith of the Church Catholick. But whence came *Filioq*; in Two of theſe Three Creeds, if not in a Provincial Synod? In a General, no man thinks it did: And ſome Learned men aſcribe that Addition of Faith to the *Eighth Synod of Toledo.* And if a Provincial of *Spain* may thus decide Points of Faith, I underſtand not why a

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National of *England* may not be heard in far leſs matters. Nay, in the Fourth of *Toledo* 'twas challeng'd by the Fathers, as the proper Right of a National Synod, that it might decide Points of Faith, as clearly appears in the 3. *Can.* of that Council.

You ſee then the Parallel ſtill holds; *Hezekiah* reform'd but his Two Tribes, and our *Engliſh Princes* but their own Territories. I come to the laſt of this Second General. The manner of the Reformation; He did as well teach the truth, as reform the corruptions: *He took away the high places, and he ſaid, Ye ſhall,* &c.

Ye ſhall worſhip before *one altar*; ſo his words are ſet down, 2 *Chron.* 32. at the 12*th.* He did not only remove their Errors, as if that paſt Triumph might ſuffice them; but for the future he enjoin'd the People to employ their Devotion according to God's ſacred Law. And did not we ſo too? Witneſs our *Catechiſms*, and our *Liturgy*, our many Forms of *Devotion* to God, and our many enlargements of thoſe Moral Duties we owe to the ſeveral ranks of our Neighbours. 'Tis then but a Calumny, and a fond one too, to call our Faith a Negative Religion, as if to believe that ſome Men are erroneous, were the ſole Article of all our Churches Creed. Truth is, we may thank them for it, that 'tis with us as with *Judah*; our *Profeſſion* muſt needs now contain ſome *Negatives*: *High places* are not allowable, *maim'd Sacraments* muſt not be ſuffered, nor *Images* ador'd; but yet they may ſoon ſee our *Poſitive* Tracts are more large than our Polemicks, and that we have taken more pains to make men good, than to make them Learned or Judicious.

I heartily wiſh I could in this regard as well defend ſome Sons of our Church, as I am ſure I can our Church it ſelf. For many mens ill carriage ſeem to divide the two clauſes here, which are ſo nearly join'd in my Text. They,

like well to remove High Places and Altars, in this regard, none ſhall ſhew more Zeal than they; nay, under pretences of ſuch corruptions as theſe, if you pleaſe, remove Church and all. But when we once come to this, *Ye ſhall worſhip before one altar*; ye ſhall bow down, ye ſhall bend your ſelves (for ſo the word here imports), ye ſhall be devout, and religious; and this not only in your inmoſt thoughts, but in your outward Forms of Deportment; they like no ſuch Reformation; 'tis enough to ſave them, that they have learned to hate *Rome*, and that they are no ſuperſtitious Perſons. Let not ſuch men deceive themſelves. 'Twill one day riſe up in Judgment, 'twill plead againſt them, and ſeverely too, that they have been bred Members of ſuch a reform'd Church, and yet neither in their Devotions, nor their Lives themſelves, have they ſhew'd the leaſt Reformation: What good will it do theſe to have been ſo Chriſtianly allow'd the Bleſſed *Cup* in the Sacrament, when yet either they come not at all, or come in their ſins to receive it? What will it avail thee to have God's Service perform'd in a Language thou *underſtand'ſt*, when either very ſeldom thou heareſt it read, or doſt not heed at all, though thou hear it? How will that poor man, whom perhaps thou now pitieſt, plead againſt thee at that Laſt Bar of Chriſt's Judgment? I indeed came ſeldom, and with ſmall Devotion to that Sacrament, becauſe I was there robb'd of that ſacred *Cup* which I know Thou thy ſelf had'ſt left me. I ſeldom came to God's Publick *Service*; and being there, I fix'd my Mind on ſome ſecular Luſts, becauſe I could not underſtand it: And in puniſhment ſhall I be equall'd to him who was *allowed the Cup*, and in Divine Service might have *underſtood* both all Hymns and Prayers? Believe it, the Reformation was made not to boaſt of, but to uſe: And he who ſhall declare, that he likes the thing, and yet is no whit the better for it, runs

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at the best but into a kind of Covetousness, (a sin St. *Paul* call'd Idolatry) for, with such miserable Churls, he loves indeed to have the power of this great Wealth, and yet he doth ne're mean to use it. But we ought to know, that when *Hezekiah* has once removed these High Places here, 'tis to this great end especially, that thenceforth we should be the more carefully devout before that allowed Altar at *Jerusalem:* And yet when we have done this, we must look for Scorns and Reproaches; For if *Judah*, or any Child of hers, be grown good, you may surely expect there will be straight work for *Rabshakeh*, as you'l see in my last part, The Reformation censur'd, it's tax'd of *Novelty*, and *Schism*, and the like. *But if ye say, We trust in the Lord our God, is not that he*, &c.

'Twas in St. *Hierom*'s time, an *Hebrew* Tradition, that this *Rabshakeh* was born a *Jew*; so that Father upon the 36*th* of *Esay*. Indeed so it often falls out, that *Judah* has no man a more bitter Enemy, than when one of the Circumcision becomes a Fugitive. Nor has our Mother-Church been by any more violently oppos'd, than by the hands who have left her, by the hands of those fickle men, whose persons she did once baptize.

But leave the Man, come to his Words; *If ye say unto me, We trust in the Lord*, &c. You see *Rabshakeh* himself was grown so much a Divine, as to aver openly, That he who puts his Hand to overturn that Religion he professes; yea, that puts his Hand to overturn it too at the same time while he likes it, pretend what he will, he trusts not in God, he trusts perhaps in the *Syrians*, or in *Egypt*.

He goes on, *Is not this he whose altars*, &c. He, *Judah*'s old God; and therefore 'twas no less than plain Novelty to leave him: These High Places and Altars, as he conceiv'd, were his too: And to leave off to communi-

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cate in that Service they once us'd, what can this be leſs than *a Schiſm?* And have not we been long ſince; nay, are we not reproached even unto this day with the very ſelf-ſame Imputations? *They have ſet up a new Church; they are wicked Schiſmaticks:* So that ſhould the moſt modeſt man entertain that Dream of *Pythagoras*, of the tranſmigration of Souls from one body to another, he would not ſtick at all to affirm, that he who was *once Rabſhakeh*, was *ſince* ſome tart Pen-man of this latter Century.

I'le ſpeak firſt of that Tax, the reproach of *Novelty*: And I beſeech you mark how *Rabſhakeh* has here fram'd his Words. He ſtrives to lay all upon this *Preſent* King; *Hezekiah took away*, and *Hezekiah ſaid*; No mention that this Fact was enjoyn'd by *Moſes*; aud practis'd too by the *Hebrew Church*, whilſt ſhe was the Primitive. Thus let but *Rabſhakeh* once tell the tale, and a Church lately reform'd ſhall indeed appear to be but a late founded Church. Ignorance may perhaps excuſe this Commander here in my Text; but ſome Learned men in our times are more extreamly to blame: for you'l ſoon ſee how fond are their main Exceptions, do but ſuppoſe their Words put into the Mouth of *Rabſhakeh*, when as here in my Text, at *Jeruſalem* he be-ſpake the beſieg'd men upon the Wall; "Hear, "O ye *Jews*, will your aged Synagogue at length turn No- "veliſt? Your Fathers worſhipp'd in theſe High Moun- "tains; but ye now ſay, *Jeruſalem*'s the place; where was "the Church before *Hezekiah?* Was't no where, or in- "viſible? Were your Predeceſſors blinded with one joint "conſent? Or are ye only become more clear of ſight, "what! than *Solomon* the wiſe, or *Aſa* the religious? Does "your God ſometime forſake his Church, or will for Hun- "dreds of Years ſuffer it to be ſo conſtantly obſcur'd? Let "not this pure Prince deceive you ſtill with theſe fond up- "ſtart toys; for 'tis your *Judah*'s greateſt Fame that ſhe's "thought very Ancient.

What

What *Jew*, I wonder, could this ſpeech move, unleſs 'twere to laughter? *Where was their Church before Hezekiah?* In the ſame place, and among the ſame People, and 'twas ſtill the very ſelf-ſame Church: I ſay, the ſame in truth of eſſence (for ſo's a *Thief* a *True* man) but not in condition or in quality: for formerly it was corrupt, now reform'd by the Law of *Moſes*; formerly it had heen dangerouſly *diſeas'd*, but 'twas now *cured* by *Hezekiah*. Let them ask *Naaman* too, where was he before *Eliſha* had heal'd him? Would he not divide the Queſtion, He was long before, but he was withal Leprous: And *Paleſtine* had ſtill a Church, but God knows 'twas a corrupt one. So then he who calls a reform'd Church *new*, becauſe 'tis newly reform'd, might as well call *Naaman* a child too, becauſe after his cure the Text plainly ſays his fleſh came again like a child's. But in earneſt, is our Age to be accounted from our recovery? Or is a man no Older than his Health? By this Philoſophy they might perſwade the Leper, that he bore Office in the *Syrian* Court before he was a Year Old. Let therefore the Modern *Rabſhakeh*'s ceaſe to upbraid us with ſuch known petty Cavils, our Church was no more inviſible than that of *Judah*, and might as well be before *Luther* was, as theirs before *Hezekiah*.

Secondly, They tax us of *Schiſm*; which is queſtionleſs a great ſin, being in frequent Texts very ſharply condemn'd in Scripture. 'Tis then committed when there is a Sciſſure, a Breach, an uncharitable Diviſion made, betwixt thoſe men eſpecially, which in point of Religion were once joyn'd aud linkt together. So that where this Rupture is, there is ſin without doubt; all the Queſtion is, on which ſide the Crime muſt lie; ſometimes it may lie on both, but it ever lies on him that gives juſt cauſe of Diviſion, not ever on him that divides. *Abraham* did divide from his Idolatrous Kindred, and ſo did St. *Paul* from his old

old friends the *Jews*. The *Orthodox Chriſtians* were forc'd to do the like when *Arrianiſm* did prevail: and yet in the opinion of theſe *Rabſhakehs* themſelves, neither *Abraham*, nor St. *Paul*, nor thoſe old Chriſtians were Schiſmatical. Thus when *Hezekiah* once had reform'd the Church of *Judea*, no man can think a Conſcientious *Jew* would at all communicate in the ſervice of theſe High Places; he did divide from it without doubt, although before, either by cuſtom or ignorance, or the like, he did it frequently without Scruple. And yet might ſuch a *Jew* be held guilty of Schiſm? no more ſure than *Hezekiah*, who both did and enjoyn'd the like; and yet the Holy Ghoſt in this Hiſtory here does in expreſs terms commend him; in the fourth verſe of this Chapter he commends him as much for reforming the Church as he does for being like *David*. So that to tax him, were indeed to affirm, that the Spirit of God commends a Schiſmatick himſelf for the very act of his ſchiſm.

Thus then they are not ſtill they who divide, but they who give or continue the juſt cauſe of Diviſion, who are guilty of that ſin we ſpeak of. But yet ſince in Church-controverſies 'tis not ſo eaſie to judg what makes that juſt cauſe I nam'd, and that no wiſe man can think it fit it ſhould be left to each private judgment: ſince in ſuch diviſions as theſe, men are extreamly apt to forget all bonds of Peace, and for poſſeſſion ſometimes of a little ſuppos'd truth, quit indeed their whole Eſtate of Charity: therefore the Ancients do oft define ſchiſm by theſe two grand notes or Characters.

Firſt, when men make Diviſions in point of Religion againſt the conſent of their lawful Paſtors: 'tis ſo defined by *St. Cyprian*, and *St. Jerom*, and others. Secondly, when men *caſt* out of the Church Catholick, and ſo damn to Hell all that hold not their opinions. And this *St. Auſtin* doth oft times call ſchiſm in the *Donatiſts*.

And

And now take Schiſm in what ſenſe, under what note you pleaſe, our Mother Church is guiltleſs of that imputation. Firſt take it for a Diviſion in Gods publick Service; She did no more in that point than what was here done by *Hezekiah:* ſince ſhe had as clear Text, and ſo as juſt cauſe, To give the *Cup* to the People; to *turn* their Devotions into a language they *underſtood*, as this King here had, to bring the *Jews* from their Old Maſs in high places, unto that one Altar at *Jeruſalem*. Nay the cauſe we had, was more juſt than that of *Judah:* becauſe the corruptions of the Weſtern Church were all backt by Tyranny, Men were conſtrain'd into Errors; when yet we read not at all that if a pious *Jew* would have kept himſelf unto that one Altar at *Jeruſalem*, he was either checkt by their Kings, or oppreſt by their Prieſts, or condemn'd to *Tophet* by their Sanhedrim.

Secondly, Take Schiſm for an oppoſition made againſt our lawful Paſtors: and our Church you'l find was not guilty in this matter neither. For at that time when the Reformation was made, we were under our own *Synods* only, and with what readineſs they joyn'd in this grand Work, you have heard in my ſecond General. 'Tis true, that for ſome hundreds of years we had been under a known Foreign Power (but yet ſuch a Power as came not amongſt us but by the breach of a great General Council, as is clear from the laſt Canon of the firſt of *Epheſus*) A Power, I ſay, Patriarchal, and ſo meerly of Eccleſiaſtical Right, not of Divine Inſtitution. A Power which in the Ancient Church had been ſet up by *Emperors*, as that of *Juſtiniana prima* by *Juſtinian* in his *11th Novel:* "Nay 'twas openly main-"tained in the great Council of *Chalcedon*, that all the "Patriarchs had gain'd their Power meerly by Cuſtom, "and by Imperial Countenance: So that 'tis *a Power that may be taken away*, without all doubt taken away, other-

wiſe *Gerſon* the wiſe Chancellor of *Paris* would not have written in *France*, *De auferibilitate Papæ*. *England* went farther, and did indeed remove that, which others did but ſay was removable: but removed it was before the Reformation; that removed it not, as men well know that know our Laws; and ſo we were left but under our own *Synods* only; ſo that now beſides a General Council which we are willing to hear, we can reſiſt no lawful Paſtors but our own.

Laſtly, Take Schiſm for that monſtrous height of uncharitableneſs, when with the *Donatiſts* thoſe men who are but a part of the Church, dare call themſelves the Church Catholick, and ſo dare damn all the reſt of Mankind, who refuſe to imbrace their opinions. I could name you thoſe who are guilty of this, but I am ſure our Dear Mother is not, who has been ſo mild to thoſe that have moſt highly oppos'd Her, that beſides the Reproaches of Novelty and Schiſm, you all well know ſhe hath been long reproached for her Charity. And yet when St. *Cyprian* being *Primate* of *Carthage*, did in his full *Synod* againſt the ſenſe of the whole Church ſet up plain Rebaptization, St. *Auſtin* defends him from the Tax of *Schiſm*, only becauſe he began that Provincial Council with this charitable Clauſe, *Neminem damnantes, nec a jure Communionis quempiam, ſi diverſum ſenſerit, removentes*, "We decree "this, ſaith he, but yet we damn no man, nor do we bar "any from the Communion of *Africk* though he think "the quite contrary. And how punctually have we obſerved this Rule of good old St. *Cyprian*? In theſe late Church-Controverſies, Opinions indeed, and Actions we condemn (and ſo did that Father too) but yet we damn no mans Perſon. For 'tis he Tenor of God Laws, *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour*, his Perſon, *as thy ſelf*; but 'tis not ſaid, Thou ſhalt love his *Deeds* or *Opinions*. For though what men

men act or opine may be in it self damnable, yet (where they are not wilfully perverse) customary breeding joyn'd with ignorance or the like, may excuse the men from damnation. And how far we have been, in such differences as these, from debarring any Man or Communion, yea, even those that heretofore did oppose, and now perhaps do disdain us, I appeal to the first twelve years of Queen *Elizabeth*, where men apparently known to have kept their old opinions, were not only *received* into the Service of our Church, but were *admitted* to the *Eucharist* it self, the very highest act of Communion.

And now I have gone through my Text, and shall only add, That I scarce know any Scruple, any Query they make, that may not well be solv'd from this Parallel. They ask why their opinions should be condemn'd for Errors, if we know not the *precise time* when they rose? yes, the High Places here were gross Errors, and yet the most learned dare not say, whether they rose in the time of the *Judges*, or in the days of King *Solomon*. They ask whether our Forefathers were *damn'd*, who, we grant, dyed in their Religion? And we demand, whether for so many hundred years were all the *Jews damn'd* that did worship God in High Places? I think they were not, if they liv'd *pious* lives, and kept themselves from all wilful ignorance. For then, tho the *Errors* of both Churches, the Hebrew and the Christian too, were in themselves no less than damnable; yet by ignorance, or by the like Apology with this, tho they made no express repentance for a sin they knew not; yet by the ordinary dispensation of Divine Grace, the men, we think, escap'd damnation. But I have one Query more, *a Case of Conscience* to leave with you. "Suppose a Jew that had been rightly bred in "the Reformation of King *Hezekiah*, should at length fall "back to do Sacrifice in the High Places, upon confidence "that his Forefathers might well be saved in that Service,

"whe-

" whether were not this man indeed guilty of murther, " (*Lev.* 17. 4.) and ſo not in ſtate of Salvation, unleſs by " expreſs Repentance he turn back to God, for this very " Apoſtacy? The *Reſolution* is eaſy, it ſcarce needs *Levi*'s help: and I beſeech you let it be thought on, and then I hope, to turn Apoſtate from a true Reformed Church will be held no ſlight trivial matter.

All this is to let you ſee the great Likeneſs betwixt the *two Churches* I have nam'd, *Judah* and *England*, both, were reform'd, by a Power, by a Council and Rule moſt approvable, without Schiſm, without Rebellion; in both the Ceremonies remain'd decent, the Service of God daily, and honourable, and which is more than this, tho they both remov'd the forbidden Altars, yet both kept the old Prieſthood too. And ſince God in ſo clear Text did approve the one, why ſhould any man ever doubt the other? And yet *Judah* in my Text was almoſt eaten out by the Sword: Alas, we are in this but too like her. Although perhaps we are more like this poor Church, when ſhe was yet more miſerable, when ſhe mixed her tears with the ſad tenor of thoſe words: Pſ. 13. 7. *By the waters of Babylon we ſat down and wept, when we remembred thee, O Sion.* For let me aſſure you, 'twas a diſtreſſed reform'd Church they there remembred, and no marvel then if that memorial were in tears: either in tears of *Repentance*, that their own foul ſins had brought on this great Deſolation: or elſe in tears of *longing* to ſee that famous Church once reſtor'd, to ſee God again ſerv'd in the beauty of holineſs, that their Raviſhed Souls might once more aſcend in Prayers and Hymns, or Hallelujahs, in one of the Old Songs of *Sion*. Let us but ſow in *ſuch* tears as theſe, and I ſhould certainly hope we ſhould e're long reap in joy; in joy temporal, to ſee our King and our ſelves in Peace, and in joy ſpiritual, to ſee that Church of God re-eſtabliſhed. *Which God*, &c.

FINIS.